

Message Text

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ACTION SS-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6814

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN

SUBJECT: RELOCATION OF FSI ARABIC LANGUAGE FIELD SCHOOL

REFS: STATE 249770; STATE 249766

1. WE HAVE DISCUSSED PERMANENT RELOCATION OF FSI TO CAIRO AND POSSIBLE INTERIM MOVE TO TUNIS WITH FSI DIRECTOR SMITH AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES. THEY WELCOME RELOCATION OF PROGRAM TO CAIRO EARLY NEXT YEAR BUT HOPE TO MINIMIZE DISRUPTION TO TRAINING INVOLVED IN TWO MAJOR MOVES IN COURSE OF SIX MONTHS. IN THIS CONNECTION THEY ASK IF OPTION OF TEMPORARY MOVE TO ALEXANDRIA INSTEAD OF TUNIS HAS BEEN FULLY CONSIDERED. ALEXANDRIA LIKELY TO HAVE AVAILABLE HOTEL SPACE DURING COMING WINTER MONTHS AND, BY BEING IN EGYPT AND CLOSE TO CAIRO, PROVIDES FLEXIBILITY AS TO EXACT TIMEING OF MOVE INTO CAIRO AS WELL AS SIMPLIFYING MANY OF THE HUMAN PROBLEMS INVOLVED.

2. FOR EXAMPLE, STUDENTS IN ALEXANDRIA WOULD HAVE CHANCE FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH EGYPTIAN LANGUAGE, CUSTOMS AND DO A BIT OF HOUSE-HUNTING ON WEEKENDS, ALL OF WHICH WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE IN TUNIS. THEIR CHILDREN, WHO

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FACE CHANGE OF SCHOOLS TWICE WITHIN COURSE OF SINGLE

ACADEMIC YEAR, MIGHT BE ABLE COMPLETE YEAR OF SCHOOLING IN ALEXANDRIA OR CAIRO. MOVE TO EGYPT WOULD AVOID SLOWDOWN IN TRAINING RESULTING FROM EXPOSURE TO WESTERN ARAB DIALECT.

3. FINALLY, LEBANESE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS HERE ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO MOVE WITH OR WITHOUT THEIR FAMILIES TO ALEXANDRIA THAN TO TUNIS. AS IT STANDS, SEVERAL HAVE EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT MOVING TO TUNIS, THOUGH ONE OR TWO APPEAR WILLING TO MAKE SUCH A MOVE.

4. TEMPORARY MOVE TO TUNIS WILL BE MORE EXPENSIVE THAN ONE TO EGYPT IN TERMS OF MOVING COSTS OF PERSONNEL, DEPENDENTS, AIR FREIGHT, SOME EFFECTS AND SUPPLIES AND INSTRUCTORS WITH PERHAPS THEIR FAMILIES.

5. ABOVE NOTWITHSTANDING, SHOULD DECISION TO MOVE TO TUNIS STAND, POST WILL APPRECIATE EARLY INDICATION OF EXACT TIMING MOVE. DIRECTOR SMITH IS PLANNING FLY TO CAIRO EARLY NEXT WEEK FOR INITIAL CONSULTATIONS ON PROGRAM. WE ARE STUDYING ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF PROJECTED MOVE. EARLY DECISION MUST ALSO BE MADE REGARDING MOVEMENT OR STORAGE OF HHE MANY RECENTLY ARRIVED STUDENTS WHICH ARE AT PRESENT SITTING ON OPEN DOCKS IN ISKANDERUN TURKEY.
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